

# Parent/Student Handbook



## **Mount Zion Christian Academy**

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# Mount Zion Christian Academy Handbook

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## **PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK**

The Student Handbook provides students, parents, and staff with a clear, concise statement of the basic policies, procedures, and philosophy of Mount Zion Christian Academy. It is written to answer the most frequently asked questions about the policies and procedures of the Academy. Adherence to these policies and procedures by students, parents, and staff enables the Academy to operate in an orderly manner. Moreover, consistent support of the policies and procedures will produce even more significant and lasting accomplishments for the students. Christian education involves encouraging and training students for responsible action. These policies and procedures are basic guidelines that should be viewed as one way we encourage and train students to recognize and assume responsibility for their actions. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of this book is to allow parents, students, and teachers to be “of one mind” in the great privilege we have of training children to honor God with their whole lives. The Board of Governors, which approves all major policies and procedures of the Academy, reviews policies as needed. Your written questions or recommendations to the Superintendent of the Academy by January 31 for the coming year are appreciated.

## **OVERVIEW**

Mount Zion Christian Academy (MZCA) is a non-denominational Christian school serving students in kindergarten through grade twelve. The school is a ministry of Mount Zion Christian Church and has been in operation since 1986.

The Academy is geared to provide academic assistance to students preparing to: (1) continue education in college, (2) continue education in technical school, or (3) obtain employment upon graduation from high school. MZCA is a comprehensive school committed to a disciplined, academic, and creative Christian environment.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Mount Zion Christian Academy is an evangelistic school, committed to the holistic development of the child in Christ-spiritually, academically, physically, socially, and mentally, in a balanced, safe and disciplined environment.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

Our basic philosophy is that Christian parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for training their children. We believe that the Mount Zion Christian Academy parents have contracted to have the Academy assist them in fulfilling their responsibility. The Academy takes a team approach to education. The team members include the student, the parent, the teacher, staff members, portions of the community (especially the Christian community) and the Church and Academy administrations. As the team works together in unity, everyone benefits.

In order for MZCA to properly educate students, the school must be a "safe place physically, psychologically, and spiritually." We respect each student and insist that this respect is mutual and consistent, with all students, parents, teachers, and the administration so that the school will be a safe, secure place for all team members.

The aims of the MZCA education program are:

1. To give God the glory in all things.
2. To teach the fundamentals of the Bible, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, vocational and technical training.
3. To provide an educational experience that is designed to point the child to God.
4. To give the students a Christ-centered education. (Colossians 1:16-18)
5. To support the efforts of parents as they accept and fulfill their responsibility to give their children a Christian education. (Psalm 78:1-7; Deuteronomy 6:7; Proverbs 6:20-23).
6. To reinforce the child's obedience and loyalty to his parents and other authority figures. (Malachi 4:5-6; Proverbs 20:20; Isaiah 38:19)
7. To equip children to view and evaluate all of life, experience, and knowledge from a Biblical perspective (Isaiah 55:6-9; Proverbs 16:29).
8. To encourage students to have a personal relationship with God, which manifests itself in knowing, loving, and fearing His authority.
9. To equip each student with the ability to communicate clearly and effectively through reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
10. To encourage creativity and an appreciation of the performing and visual arts.
11. To teach the fundamentals of physical fitness, nutrition and hygiene.

### **ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The selection of students will be based upon interviews with the administration, student achievement, entrance testing, receiving school records, and the submission of all fees and forms. A registration fee is required to hold a place for each child. Furthermore, timely payment of all additional fees is required to keep each registration in good standing. In addition, parents/guardians and students must sign a statement that they will abide by, and cooperate with all rules, regulations and policies of Mount Zion Christian Academy.

The age requirements for students entering school are: 1) a child must be 5 years old by November 15<sup>th</sup> to enter K-5; (Maturity level of the child as well as the level of academic potential of the child, will also be determining factors), and 2) a child must be 6 years old by December 31<sup>st</sup> to enter 1<sup>st</sup> grade. (Maturity level of the child, as well as the level of academic potential of the child, will also be determining factors).

Students will not be admitted into the school program after the fifth day of the fourth quarter of the school year. **Any student who has been pregnant or has caused a pregnancy (full term, abortion, or miscarriage) is not eligible for admission to Mount Zion Christian Academy.**

Mount Zion Christian Academy (MZCA) located at 3519 Fayetteville Street, Durham, North Carolina, admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other school administered programs. However, MZCA does reserve the right to use appropriate selection criteria in fulfillment of its stated goals.

## **DRUG TESTING**

MZCA strongly prohibits the use of controlled substances (Drugs/Alcohol). Any student suspected of drug use will be tested. **Parents will be responsible for paying the cost of the test.** If a student tests positive for drugs at the initial testing, that student will be placed on probation and administered a random drug test at a later date. If that student again tests positive for drugs he or she will be expelled for the remainder of the semester/year, depending on the circumstance. Parents of students who are tested will be notified of the test and the test results.

## **REGISTRATION PROCEDURE**

The registration procedure is as follows:

- 1) Submit the following to the school office.
  - a. The full registration fee
  - b. Completed application form(s)
  - c. Copy of recent physical examination with medical history and immunization record
  - d. A birth certificate (a photocopy is acceptable)
  - e. A current head and shoulder photo
  - f. Copy of Social Security Card
- 2) *No student will be allowed admittance to MZCA without going through the registration procedure through the school's administrative office.*
- 3) If possible, parents must attend the parent orientation. A copy of the school's handbook, supply list(s), course syllabuses, and other pertinent information will be given at this time.

## **FINANCIAL POLICY**

In order for MZCA to deliver the finest possible education, we need parents to cooperate by paying all tuition and fees on time. When money is paid on time, the Academy runs smoothly.

Tuition can be paid by any of the two (2) following methods:

1. Installment Payment Plan  
The tuition is paid in ten equal, monthly installments (September through June) for day school, and in two semester installments (September & January), or in four (4) quarterly installments (September, November, January, & March) for boarding school. Payments are due by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month *unless otherwise*

*noted.* Students will not be allowed to attend school if payment is not received.

## 2. Lump Sum Payment Plan

The entire tuition can be paid by August 30<sup>th</sup>. Parents who choose this option will receive a 10% discount off the price of the tuition. *This plan does not apply to boarding tuition.*

Students whose accounts are not paid in full will not be allowed to take final examinations. Their transcripts or records will not be released until all bills are paid.

A 10% late fee will be automatically assessed to your account for all late payments. There will be a charge of \$25 dollars on all returned checks. *All fees and tuition payments are non-refundable.*

## **BASIC ACADEMIC MATTERS**

### Accreditation

Mount Zion Christian Academy is accredited by the International Christian Accrediting Association (ICAA), of the Oral Roberts University Educational Fellowship (ORUEF) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) through AdvancED. We are also registered with the North Carolina State Department of Non-Public Instruction.

Accreditation by a state or regional agency is a type of quality assurance mechanism by which the services and operations of educational institutions or programs are evaluated and verified by an external body to determine if applicable and recognized standards are being met. MZCA sought accreditation by the International Christian Accrediting Association (ICAA) for several reasons:

1. Many state-approved and/or state-adopted textbooks are developed by secular authors who reject fundamental Christian principles, resulting in the production of books that are saturated with humanist values. Conversely, Mount Zion Christian Academy utilizes Christian curricula which are consistent with a biblical world view.
2. Mount Zion Christian Academy believes it is unreasonable for parents desiring an education for their children, which is consistent with a biblical world view, to enroll them in a private parochial institution with the same curriculum, methods and objectives of a public school. MZCA endeavors to be a viable, Christian education alternative for parents.
3. The basic criteria for college admissions are student aptitude and achievement as determined by nationally normed, standardized tests. The instructional program of Mount Zion Christian Academy is designed and implemented to ensure its graduates are competitive with students nationwide—Achieving Excellence through Jesus Christ.

## Faculty

All staff members of the Mount Zion Christian Academy have been carefully selected on the basis of their education, experience, and integrity. The most outstanding requirements for the instructional staff are an unselfish spirit of dedication to children, a belief that the Christian school ministry is their service to God, and a complete and personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives. The entire staff of MZCA has a personal “born again” relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and is filled with the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues. We attempt to hold our teachers to the following qualifications:

1. A call of God to minister to children
2. To be certified or working towards that end in their particular field of instruction.
3. The ability to convey love and exercise gentleness and patience when relating to students.
4. The ability to lead a student into a personal saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. The ability to work with and under the leadership of Mount Zion Christian Academy.
6. The ability to maintain a wholesome and Christ-centered working relationship with colleagues.
7. The ability to communicate effectively and establish support with parents.

## **CURRICULUM STATEMENT**

Mount Zion Christian Academy has self-contained, traditional classrooms at the elementary level, with low pupil/teacher ratios in all classes. Heavy emphasis is placed on God's principles through Bible study, prayer, memory work, and weekly convocation. Academic training, which is Christ-centered, includes a phonics oriented reading program, English, history, spelling science, penmanship, mathematics, literature, foreign language, physical education, computer literacy, keyboarding, etc. At the secondary level, students receive specialized college preparatory instruction in English, mathematics, history, science, foreign language and elective course work. Most courses are taught using the A Beka textbooks; the most widely used Christian curricula in the United States.

MZCA uses other secondary materials, which include those from Bob Jones University of Greenville, South Carolina, Alpha Omega Publications of Tempe, Arizona, and materials appropriately developed and selected by the staff of Mount Zion Christian Academy.

The basic instructional approach to learning is the conventional model of demonstration, lecture and discussion. This teacher-directed mode of instruction places accountability with the teacher, the student and the parent(s).

## **SCHOOL DAYS**

The school day starts at 8:25 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. for both the upper and lower schools. Children will be released only to their legal guardian or parent, or those listed on the restricted pick-up form. A written request must be submitted to the office by the parent or guardian for the child to be released to any person whose name is not listed on the restricted pick-up form. Such persons will be required to show I.D.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework shall be assigned in such quantities as to provide adequate training in independent study and to practice the skills covered in the classroom without interfering too much with non-academic activities and with meeting a healthy bedtime hour. If a student consistently has difficulty in this area, something is wrong with either the amount of work assigned, with his/her handling of time, or with the amount of time spent in extracurricular activities. Whatever the reason, parents should get in touch with the school immediately so that the matter can be given prompt attention.

Homework is given for the following purposes:

1. To provide essential practice in needed skills
2. To train students in good work habits
3. To afford opportunities for increasing self-direction
4. To enrich and extend school experiences
5. To help students learn to budget their time
6. To promote growth in responsibility
7. To remediate
8. To involve parent(s) with their child's/children's academic achievement

Parents can help their children get the most benefit from homework by doing the following:

1. Cooperate with the school
2. Provide suitable study conditions (desk, light, proper books and resources, supplies, and a quiet place)
3. Schedule a specific time for children to do homework each day and make sure they stick to it
4. Encourage your children, but avoid any undue pressure.
5. Show interest and get involved in what your children are doing, but do not do their homework for them.
6. Understand that the school expects homework to be accomplished.



## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

1. Report Cards are distributed four times each year at the conclusion of each grading period, no later than five (5) days after the end of the grading period.
2. Interim Reports are distributed between the fourth and the sixth weeks of each grading period to each student. These reports are informational only, and will be used at the teacher's discretion.
3. Teachers will contact the parents of students who are having difficulties academically.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

When parents desire direct communication with a teacher, they should telephone the school office at (919) 688-4245 ext. 243 to make an appointment with the teacher or contact the teacher via email. Conferences may be requested by the parent, administration and/or teacher. All conferences must be scheduled in advance; conferences may not be held during class time. Full cooperation on the part of parents and students is expected and appreciated.

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Any high school student that falls under the following guidelines is said to be on academic probation:

1. Receiving a grade of “59” or below in any core high school course(s).
2. Playing any competitive sport and not maintaining a GPA of 2.0 or better each nine week grading period (the student will not be allowed to participate in practice or play in any games).
3. Any student who is not participating in any athletic activities, but has a GPA below a 2.0.
4. Any scholarship student who fails to meet the requirements of that particular scholarship.
5. Students in grades 6, 7 and 8 must maintain a numeric average of “70” or better and receive a passing grade in each of their core subjects each nine week grading period in order to participate in any competitive sport.

**Note:** Parents/Guardians will be informed prior to the student being placed on probationary status, or if he/she has failed to meet the requirements for keeping a particular scholarship.

## **PROMOTION POLICY**

A student who fails English or two core academic subjects may proceed to the next grade on probation if the academic deficiencies are made up through an approved summer school program. A student who fails English and two or more academic subjects must repeat the entire grade. Elementary students must successfully master phonics, reading, language and math. Students in middle school must pass all core subjects, this includes; language Arts, math, science, and history. In addition, Bible is a required class and each student must get a passing grade in Bible. All high school students must receive a passing grade in Bible in order to be promoted to the next grade level.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students in grades 9-12 will choose one of the three (3) programs shown below in pursuit of the desired diploma. The honors and college prep diploma programs feature courses that prepare students for college level work and admission to college. Students must consult their academic advisor prior to a change from one program to another. There is a minimum of 22 credits required to graduate. Each program will have its own respective diploma.

Honors Diploma***	College Preparatory**	General Diploma
<b>Bible</b> (4 units)	<b>Bible</b> (4 units)	<b>Bible</b> (4 units)
<b>English</b> (4 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English 9</li> <li>English 10</li> <li>English 11</li> <li>English 12</li> </ul>	<b>English</b> (4 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English 9</li> <li>English 10</li> <li>English 11</li> <li>English 12</li> </ul>	<b>English</b> (4 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English 9</li> <li>English 10</li> <li>English 11</li> <li>English 12</li> </ul>
<b>Mathematics</b> (4 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Algebra I</li> <li>Geometry</li> <li>Algebra II</li> <li>Advanced Math (Trig, Pre-Calculus, Calculus)</li> </ul>	<b>Mathematics</b> (4 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Algebra I</li> <li>Geometry</li> <li>Algebra II</li> <li>Advanced Math (Trig, Pre-Calculus, Calculus)</li> </ul>	<b>Mathematics</b> (3 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Algebra I</li> <li>Geometry</li> <li>Consumer Math</li> </ul>
<b>Science</b> (4 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biology</li> <li>Physical Science</li> <li>Chemistry</li> <li>Physics</li> <li>Earth/Env. Science</li> </ul>	<b>Science</b> (3 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biology</li> <li>Physical Science</li> <li>Chemistry or Earth/Env. Science</li> </ul>	<b>Science</b> (3 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biology</li> <li>Physical Science</li> <li>Earth/Env. Science</li> </ul>
<b>World Studies</b> (4 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am. Govt./Econ</li> <li>U.S. History</li> <li>World History/Geography</li> <li>Contemporary Affairs</li> </ul>	<b>World Studies</b> (3 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am. Govt./Econ</li> <li>U.S. History</li> <li>World History/Geography</li> </ul>	<b>World Studies</b> (3 units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am. Govt./Econ</li> <li>U.S. History</li> <li>World History/Geography</li> </ul>
<b>Foreign Language</b> (2 units)	<b>Foreign Language</b> (2 units)	N/A
<b>Health and Physical Fitness</b> (1 unit)	<b>Health and Physical Fitness</b> (1 unit)	<b>Health and Physical Fitness</b> (1 unit)
<b>Electives</b> (4 units)	<b>Electives</b> (5 units)	<b>Electives</b> (8 units)

\*\*\* Students must have an overall four-year average of 3.0 or above to have honors program denoted on diploma.

\*\* It is required that prospective students take a foreign language and a mathematics course in twelfth grade.

Note: Bible, Computer Applications, and Fine Arts are required choices for elective classes.

**Grading Scale**

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Grade Point	Honors
A	90-100	4.0	5.0
B	80-89	3.0	4.0
C	70-79	2.0	3.0
D	60-69	1.0	2.0
F	0-59	0.0	0.0

**Transfer Credits/Repeat Courses/Grade Point Average (GPA) Rank-in-Class**

Full or partial units of credit earned in an approved high school other than MZCA will be accepted toward graduation and used to compute a student's Grade Point Average (GPA) and Rank-in-Class.

With principal approval, a student may repeat a course(s). Both grades will appear on the transcript and will be used in the computing of GPA and Rank-in-Class.

Class rank shall be computed at the end of the first semester of the senior year (including summer school); and ranking will only be done for those students with a completed record.

Grades earned in the Credit Recovery Program, or "credit" courses taken at an approved post-secondary institution in accordance with the "Dual Enrollment Policy" will be used in the computing of GPA and Rank-in-Class.

For the purpose of cumulative high school GPA for college admission, all grades, including all honors points, regardless of where they were earned, will be included. Thus, a student entering Mount Zion Christian Academy during high school and bringing in honors credits that are not available at MZCA will not be penalized when applying for college admissions or scholarships.

Beginning with the 2000-2001 school year, students will be required to take a total of four courses in math and four courses in science to receive an honors diploma.

**Honors and Awards**

A student may be considered to receive the valedictorian and salutatorian honors if he/she has been enrolled at MZCA for four (4) consecutive semesters. Students must be graduating within an 8-semester period in order to receive honor student recognition; a student must meet honors course work and cumulative GPA requirements.

**Drop/Add Period**

A student may drop or add a course no later than five (5) days after the beginning of a given semester. If the principal should permit a student to drop a class for some extenuating reason after the prescribed drop/add period all courses attempted will be recorded and any dropped courses will be labeled either WP (withdrew passing) or WF (withdrew failing). No student will be allowed to drop a course unless the parent(s)/guardian(s) of that student submit a letter to the guidance office requesting that their child be dropped from the course. A copy of this letter will be placed in the student's cumulative folder.

## **ACADEMIC ADVISOR**

The academic advisor will talk with students (Grades 9-12) concerning graduation requirements and will provide information on the various college entrance exams. The academic advisor will discuss with student-athletes the course requirements and guidelines for the NCAA Clearinghouse.

## **SCHOOL RECORDS**

The school maintains a complete record including a cumulative academic and guidance record, for each student. All material in these records are strictly confidential and are available only according to the following policy:

1. No report cards or student records will be released to parents or to another school if the family is delinquent in tuition payments or has a debt of any kind with the school.
2. Parents or guardians have the right to inspect and review all official records, files, and dates directly relating to their children, including all material that is incorporated into their student's cumulative record folder.
3. When a student becomes eighteen (18) years of age, he/she will be granted the same access to records as parents/guardians.
4. Parental requests to inspect and review the official records relating to a child shall be made in writing to the administration. Such requests will be honored within ten (10) school days following receipt of the request. All records will be reviewed or inspected in the presence of the principal so that proper explanation can be given.
5. Parents shall have an opportunity for a hearing with the administration to challenge the content of their student's school records and to insure that the records are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student.
6. There will be no release of a student's personal record or files or any data in those records with out the written consent of parent or guardian to any individual, agency, or organization other than the following:
  - a. Staff members of the school who have legitimate educational interests;
  - b. Court or law enforcement officials, in response to a subpoena or court order
  - c. Certain federal, state, or local authorities performing functions allowed by law
  - d. Officials of other schools in which the student intends to enroll upon proof of application.

Note: In all such cases, the parents are to be notified of the transfer of records.

7. Release of report cards, etc. to non-custodial parents

- a. Non-custodial parents have equal access to report cards, teacher conferences, etc., together with the custodial parent. By law, both have joint input into the education of the child.
- b. If the final judgment and/or settlement agreement stipulates otherwise, the custodial parent must submit a copy of that judgment or agreement to the administration if the school is to comply.
- c. Whenever a request by a non-custodial parent is made for information, appearance at a teacher's conference, etc., the custodial parent shall be promptly notified by the school of the non-custodial parent's request for information.

### **DRESS CODE**

A student's appearance should reflect the impression that formal learning is important enough to call for precision and neatness in dress. Students must be in uniform before entering the school building. Students in all grades are to be in uniform all day, every day.

#### **Girls' Dress Code**

Grades K-4 *Jumpers:* navy blue

*Blouse:* white with round collar or light blue with Peter Pan collar, short or long sleeves

Grades 5-12 *Skirt:* kick-pleat skirt, navy blue (Skirt should be measured from the waist to 1" (one inch) below the knee.)

*Blouse:* light blue oxford with buttoned down collar and light blue polo (Grades 5-8), short or long sleeves

Grades 7-12 *Hosiery:* Students may wear nude or opaque stockings.

All grades *Socks:* All grades can wear socks. The color of socks that can be worn are (above ankle height) white, navy blue, or maroon. (No symbols, names or designs)

*Sweater:* maroon, monogrammed sweater  
No other sweater is permitted.

*Coats/Jackets:* Nothing is to be worn over the uniform except the regulated sweater/jacket. No outside jackets, coats, vests, or warm-up suits are to be worn during school hours.

## Girls Dress Code Continued

*Shoes:* All girls may wear black or brown casual style shoes or a small pump with the toe enclosed. Sandals, flip-flops, slippers, or athletic shoes are not allowed. Athletic shoes may be brought and worn for recess or Physical Education.

Grades K-8 *Jewelry:* No jewelry except a wrist watch and/or stud earrings. Stud earrings are earrings that do not extend beyond the ear lobe. They should not dangle at all. *No student may wear more than one earring per ear. Jewelry that is not up to code will be confiscated and released only to parents.*

Grades 9-12 *Jewelry:* Medium-sized earrings not extending to the lower jawbone, are allowed. The principal reserves the right to approve or disapprove any piece of jewelry worn by a student. Grades 11 and 12 may wear class rings. *No student may wear more than one earring per ear. Jewelry that is not up to code will be confiscated and released only to parents.*

All grades *Make-up:* Lipstick or lip liner is not to be worn by any female student. Female students may wear colorless lip gloss. *Tattoos are not to be displayed and must be covered at all times.*

*Hats/Caps:* No hats or baseball caps are to be worn in the school building.

*Hairstyles:* Hairstyles should be modest (no spikes, multi-color, etc.) *All hairstyles are subject to administrative approval.*

Knee-length khaki shorts may be worn on Mondays through Thursdays during the months of September, May, and June. However, these shorts may not be cargo-style shorts.

## Boys' Dress Code

All grades *Pants:* Tan/khaki. The pants may be purchased from approved uniform vendors. No elastic is allowed at the bottom of the pants (hem). No cargo or carpenter style pants are allowed.

*Shirts:* Light blue oxford style shirt with buttoned down collar, short or long sleeves.

Male students in **grades 9-12** may also wear the navy blue polo style shirt, which can be purchased from the approved uniform vendors.

Male students in **K-8** may also wear the light blue polo style shirt, which can be purchased from the approved uniform vendors.

*Ties:* maroon tie, purchased from an approved uniform vendor

*Belts:* Plain, black or brown leather belt (no studs, etc.). Belts must be worn in the belt loops and not tied.

## Boys Dress Code Continued

*Sweater:* maroon, monogrammed sweater  
No other sweater is permitted.

*Coats/Jackets:* Nothing is to be worn over the uniform except the regulated sweater/jacket. No outside jackets, coats, vests, or warm-up suits are to be worn during school hours.

*Socks:* The color of socks that can be worn are (above ankle height) white, navy blue, black or brown. (No symbols, names or designs)

*Shoes:* black or brown casual style shoes

*Jewelry:* The principal reserves the right to approve or disapprove any piece of jewelry worn by a student. Grades 11 and 12 only are allowed to wear class rings. Male students are not allowed to wear earrings. *Tattoos are not to be displayed and must be covered at all times.*

*Hats/Caps:* No hats or baseball caps are to be worn in the school building.

*Hair:* Haircuts should be low and neat, no more than 2" in length. Braids, twists, large Afros, etc., are not allowed. Designs should not be cut into the hair. Only one part in the hair will be allowed. *All hairstyles are subject to administrative approval.*

Knee-length khaki shorts may be worn on Mondays through Thursdays during the months of September, May, and June. However, these shorts may not be cargo-style shorts.

Students cannot attend class unless they are completely dressed according to the above code. If a child reports to school out of uniform, the administration will notify the parents to come and pick up their child and the child will not be allowed to go to his/her classes until he/she is in proper uniform. Absences incurred as a result of being out of uniform are unexcused absences.<sup>3</sup>

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

Our goal should always be to obey the Scripture that says, "*So then, whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do all to the glory of God.*" All students of Mount Zion Christian Academy both on and off campus must maintain certain guidelines of conduct, so that we might all live happily together and function as smoothly as possible.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE**

Mount Zion Christian Academy must have the full support and agreement of parents and students concerning school policies and procedures. Therefore, *all new students are accepted on a probationary status to evaluate their adaptation and attitudes toward our school philosophy and rules.* Incoming students will have two weeks to make behavioral adjustments to the school. If the student does not adjust, they must withdraw from MZCA. It is important that students be obedient to authorities for instruction, safety, and learning. Self-control and order are very important to leading a Godly life, and proper discipline will train the students in these areas.

MZCA is not a corrective institution. Consequently, parents should not enroll their children with the idea that the school will reform them. The MZCA staff is prepared to work with the home but is not to take the place of parents who have experienced difficulty in fulfilling their role.

Discipline will be carried out as instructed by the Word of God. Teachers will administer correction immediately either by verbal correction or extra work (academic or disciplinary).

Students will be held responsible for their actions and shall conduct themselves in keeping with the general conduct and classroom policies outlined in this handbook.

The process of discipline at MZCA follows a definite pattern and is primarily administered by the classroom teacher. Principals shall consider all aggravating or mitigating circumstances they deem relevant in determining the appropriate consequence for violating school rules. Examples of aggravating or mitigating circumstances that may be considered include but are not limited to:

- The student's age;
- The student's intent;
- The student's disciplinary history, including number of infractions and prior discipline for the same violation;
- The student's academic history;
- Whether the conduct caused a threat to safety;
- Whether school property or personal property was damaged;
- Whether the conduct caused a substantial disruption of the educational environment;
- Whether a weapon was involved and whether any injury resulted.



## **Infraction Levels**

The specific steps and levels of intensity of our discipline process are:

- Level 1: Verbal/Written Warning (discipline report issued for infractions)
- Level 2: In-School Suspension (parent notified)
- Level 3: Suspension—The student is referred to the administrative staff with a current discipline statement. Prior discipline reports are examined also, before the number of days of suspension is given. This will be recorded in the student's permanent record. Students will be allowed to make up missed assignments as a result of a suspension, if the work is submitted upon the student's return to school. (Tests and quizzes are at the discretion of the teacher.)
- Level 4: Probation—Probation is invoked by the administration when it becomes apparent that a student has a serious problem abiding by the rules of MZCA. It gives the student an opportunity to correct his/her problem and to assume the responsibilities involved in a more mature and appropriate manner. Any student who receives 15 discipline reports in any given semester will be placed on probation. *Violation of probation will result in automatic expulsion.*

The problems for which a student can be placed on probation are:

1. Attitude: A rebellious spirit, which is unchanged after much effort by the teacher, or a continued negative or uncooperative attitude and bad influence upon other students.
  2. Misconduct: Continued deliberate disobedience to an authority, which has an adverse affect upon the school's Christian testimony.
- Level 5: Expulsion -Expulsion is a forced withdrawal from school for disciplinary reasons. A student who has been expelled may be considered for re-admission to the school after the conclusion of the semester in which the expulsion occurred for mitigating circumstances, but will be re-enrolled on a probationary status.

## **General Conduct**

General conduct guidelines are listed below, along with the corresponding infraction level associated with noncompliance where appropriate.

1. Respect the authority of teachers and administration.
2. Be kind and courteous to all students and staff.
3. Adhere to the prescribed uniform standards indicated in the Dress Code section of this handbook.
4. Do not use or possess drugs, alcohol or tobacco products on campus, on school sponsored trips, or at school sponsored functions. (Level 5)
5. Do not use vulgar, abusive, or profane language. The administration reserves the right to determine what constitutes vulgar, abusive, or profane language. (Level 3)
6. Do not engage in public displays of affection with other students (holding hands, embracing, kissing, etc.) Male and female students are *not* permitted to be alone in unsupervised areas. (Level 3)

7. No gum chewing, candy, or eating in classrooms. (Level 1)
8. No weapons (guns, knives, or facsimiles of a weapon, etc.) are allowed on campus. (Level 5)
9. Do not destroy or deface any walls, fixtures or furniture in the school building or boarding facility. (Level 3—Parents are responsible for repairs.)
10. No horseplay or fighting/instigating a fight is allowed. (Level 3)
11. No food or drinks are allowed anywhere outside the dining rooms unless special permission is granted. (Level 1)
12. Do not bring toys of any kind to school (Before and After School Care) unless faculty or administration grants special permission. Toys will be confiscated and will be released to parents/guardians only. (Level 1)
13. Do not bring electronic devices (music players, cellular phones, cameras, etc.), secular music or literature to school. Such items will be confiscated and will be released to parents only for the first violation. Subsequent violations will result in the device being held in the administrative office for the number of days equal to the number of infractions committed. (Level 2)
14. Theft of school property, or others belongings is prohibited. (Level 5)
15. All medication should be turned in to the school office.

### **Classroom Conduct**

1. Students are expected to report to their scheduled classes on time. Excessive class tardiness and/or failure to report to class will result in suspension. (Level 3)
2. Address teachers and administrators as Sir or Ma'am
3. Students must get a late pass from the school office to enter any classroom after the class period has begun.
4. No talking without the teacher's permission
5. Do not interrupt the teacher while he/she is teaching. Hold your questions until he/she is finished speaking or until the end of class.
6. If a difference of opinion arises between a student and the teacher or between students, all parties involved are asked to remain calm. Disputes should not interrupt class. At the appropriate time, each party should express him/herself with respect and humility, knowing that he/she may be wrong.
7. Disputes should be handled one on one. Only those directly involved in the dispute should be involved in the reconciliation efforts
8. Do not leave the class without the teacher's permission. Teachers must know where students are at all times. Students must leave a given teacher's classroom with a pass signed with the teacher's signature (first & last name).
9. Be sure you have the necessary books and writing tools, paper, etc. for every class.

10. Do not cheat on tests, quizzes, or homework. Those that give or receive information in cheating will both be punished. *Offenders will receive a grade of zero, parents will be notified, and suspension or expulsion will be assigned, depending on the circumstance.* Students will be allowed to make up missed assignments as a result of a suspension, if the work is submitted within one day of the student's return to school. (Tests and quizzes are at the discretion of the teacher) (Level 3)
11. Keep the classrooms clean. Clean up after yourself.
12. If a student is removed from a class due to disruptive behavior, that student should report immediately to the Assistant Principal's office with a referral form unless otherwise instructed by the teacher.
13. Students have a specific number of days (assigned by the teacher) to make up work for every excused/unexcused day of absence.

*Note: Violation of the General Conduct rules or Classroom Conduct rules may result in a 1-15 day suspension or expulsion.*

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Mount Zion Christian Academy forbids all forms of sexual harassment between and among all students and employees. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which may interfere with a student's educational performance or participation in a school-related activity, or create a hostile or intimidating environment. The sexual harassment policy includes a detailed definition of specific behaviors and activities that qualify as sexual harassment. Complaints of sexual harassment should be made in writing to the school principal. Disciplinary action for sexual harassment ranges from suspension for students to dismissal for employees.

### **BULLYING AND HARASSING BEHAVIOR**

Mount Zion Christian Academy forbids all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying. As used in this Article, "bullying or harassing behavior" is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on school transportation, and that:

- (1) Places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
- (2) Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. For purposes of this section, "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Bullying or harassing behavior includes, but is not limited to, acts reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

- (a) No student or school employee shall be subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by school employees or students.
- (b) No person shall engage in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness, or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior.
- (c) A school employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall report the incident to the appropriate school official.
- (d) A student or volunteer who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior should report the incident to the appropriate school official. (2009-212, s. 1; 2009-570, s.39.)

**§ 14-458.1 Cyber-bullying; penalty.**

- (a) Except as otherwise made unlawful by this Article, it shall be unlawful for any person to use a computer or computer network to do any of the following:
  - 1) With the intent to intimidate or torment a minor:
    - a. Build a fake profile or Web site;
    - b. Pose as a minor in:
      - 1. An Internet chat room;
      - 2. An electronic mail message; or
      - 3. An instant message;
    - c. Follow a minor online or into an Internet chat room; or
    - d. Post or encourage others to post on the Internet private, personal, or sexual information pertaining to a minor.
  - 2) With the intent to intimidate or torment a minor or the minor's parent or guardian:
    - a. Post a real or doctored image of a minor on the Internet;
    - b. Access, alter, or erase any computer network, computer data, computer program, or computer software, including breaking into a password protected account or stealing or otherwise accessing passwords; or
    - c. Use a computer system for repeated, continuing, or sustained electronic communications, including electronic mail or other transmissions, to a minor.
  - 3) Make any statement, whether true or false, intending to immediately provoke, and that is likely to provoke, any third party to stalk or harass a minor.
  - 4) Copy and disseminate, or cause to be made, an unauthorized copy of any data pertaining to a minor for the purpose of intimidating or tormenting that minor (in any form, including, but not limited to, any printed or electronic form of computer data, computer programs, or computer software residing in, communicated by, or produced by a computer or computer network).
  - 5) Sign up a minor for a pornographic Internet site with the intent to intimidate or torment the minor.
  - 6) Without authorization of the minor or the minor's parent or guardian, sign up a minor for electronic mailing lists or to receive junk electronic messages and instant messages, with the intent to intimidate or torment the minor.

- (b) Any person who violates this section shall be guilty of cyber-bullying, which offense shall be punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor if the defendant is 18 years of age or older at the time the offense is committed. If the defendant is under the age of 18 at the time the offense is committed, the offense shall be punishable as a Class 2 misdemeanor.
- (c) Whenever any person pleads guilty to or is guilty of an offense under this section, and the offense was committed before the person attained the age of 18 years, the court may, without entering a judgment of guilt and with the consent of the defendant, defer further proceedings and place the defendant on probation upon such reasonable terms and conditions as the court may require. Upon fulfillment of the terms and conditions of the probation provided for in this subsection, the court shall discharge the defendant and dismiss the proceedings against the defendant. Discharge and dismissal under this subsection shall be without court adjudication of guilt and shall not be deemed a conviction for purposes of this section or for purposes of disqualifications for disabilities imposed by law upon conviction of a crime. Upon discharge and dismissal pursuant to this subsection, the person may apply for an order to expunge the complete record of the proceedings resulting in the dismissal and discharge, pursuant to the procedures and requirements set forth in G.S. 15A-146. (2009-551, s. 1; 2012-149, s. 3.)

### **Demerit System**

Effective the 2005-2006 academic year, Mount Zion Christian Academy has implemented a demerit system. Each discipline report a student receives will be equivalent to one (1) demerit. A student will receive a suspension for every five (5) demerits he/she receives. This does not include the General or Classroom conduct rules, which specify suspension/expulsion for violation. Students who receive suspensions will be subject to the policies and procedures indicated in the Suspension section of this handbook.

### **Suspension**

Suspension from either one class or all classes may be given for 1 to 15 consecutive days. When a student is suspended, the following will occur:

1. Parents will be notified and required to take the child home.
2. The student will not return to school until the school has formally admitted him/her. *A parent conference must precede readmission of a student following a long-term suspension of 10 or more days.*
3. Students with repeated suspensions in excess of three (3) in any given semester will be brought before the administration for a disciplinary review. At that time the administration will determine whether that student will be allowed to remain enrolled at MZCA.

### **Dismissal from Class**

If a teacher finds it necessary to send a student from the classroom because of disruptive behavior (fighting, profanity, excessive talking, disrespect, disobedience, failing to bring proper materials to class, dishonesty, skipping detention, dangerous objects, fraternizing, chewing gum, cheating on tests/quizzes) he/she would report to the assistant principal's office with a referral. Re-admittance to the particular class will come according to the administration's discretion. The administration may require a parent conference.

### **Godly Wisdom**

In order for the school and family to operate in harmony, parents are asked to follow the procedure below if their children come home complaining about discipline:

1. Give the school the benefit of the doubt. MZCA has the best interest of the student at heart. There are legitimate reasons for all our rules and methods of discipline for offenders.
2. Support the administration and call the school for clarification on anything you are not clear on.
3. Never interrupt a teacher while he/she is teaching. If you must enter the classroom, get a pass from the school office first.
4. Never challenge a teacher's actions in front of your child. You could damage the teacher-student relationship immensely.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

It is the responsibility of the student and the parent to establish the habit of being punctual and regular in attendance. Faithful attendance is necessary to maximize the benefits of education.

#### **General Requirements**

1. The North Carolina Division of Non-Public Education requires that each child adhere to compulsory school attendance standards.
2. MZCA prohibits its students from missing more than ten (10) days of class per semester to receive a grade/credit. This rule may be waived in the case of extended illness with written documentation from a physician. The student will be responsible for all assignments, quizzes, tests, and exams in order to receive a grade/credit.
3. Five (5) unexcused tardies equal one unexcused absence. Absences accrued from tardiness are included in the calculation of absences per semester.

#### **Minimum Attendance Requirements and Procedures**

After five consecutive or ten accumulated absences in a semester, the principal may require a written doctor's excuse for any additional absences attributed to illness.

After five absences have been accumulated, whether excused or unexcused, the school will notify the parent/guardian via email.

When a student has been absent from class or school ten times in a semester or twenty times in a school year, whether excused or unexcused, the principal or designee shall notify the parent/guardian or custodian of the absences in writing. The notice shall include a warning of the possible consequences of additional absences and/or a copy of this policy.

### **Excused Absences and Early Dismissal:**

Excused absences include absences due to illness or death in the family. Medical appointments, other appointments and some other reasons may also be excused if the school is notified in writing. The principal reserves the right to deem any absence excused or non-excused. *If a student is absent, a written statement from the parent/guardian giving the reason the student was absent must be presented to the office upon the child's return to school.* If the note is not received within two school days after the student returns to school, the student will receive an unexcused absence.

It is the student's responsibility to find out what work was missed in his/her absence. If the absence was excused, the student has one day for every day of absence to make-up the work. If the absence was unexcused, no makeup work or tests will be taken for credit.

*Note: Five (5) unexcused tardies equal one (1) unexcused absence. If a student has 10 (ten) or more unexcused absences in any class during the semester, he/she will not receive credit for that class.*

Early dismissal will be granted for the same reasons allowable for excused absences. Students are encouraged to schedule appointments with their doctor or dentist during times other than school hours. To obtain an early dismissal slip a student must submit a written note from his parents to the teacher. The teacher will send the student to the school office for checkout. The student should follow the following procedure:

1. Give the written note to the office.
2. The person responsible for the child must sign the child out. High school students can sign themselves out.
3. Students returning the same day must be sure to sign in before returning to class.

### **Absence with Parental Permission**

The administrative staff shall make the final decision of whether an absence is excused or unexcused. A student who is absent with his/her parent's knowledge may be required to make up the missed time as assigned by the administration.

### **Medical Excuses**

1. Permanent excuses: These must include a description of physical disabilities, which would prevent participation of student in any physical education exercises. Permanent excuses are to be filed in the student's cumulative folder.
2. If the administration sees a pattern developing whereby a student is habitually absent from school, no excuses other than those validated by a physician will be accepted.

### **Truancy**

Any class missed for unexcused reasons during the school day will result in a zero for that class or session missed (tests, projects, quizzes, etc.).

### **BUILDING AND GROUNDS**

All school facilities belong to the Lord. Students will refrain from any actions that may result in damage to the property or to the appearance of the building and grounds. Any damage to the building, furnishings or grounds will be repaired and/or replaced at the expense of the parent(s)/guardian(s) of those causing the damage. Students are also subject to disciplinary action for damage caused either by negligence or willful destruction.

### **STUDENT DRIVERS**

Any student who drives to school must turn in his/her car keys to the Assistant Principal upon arrival to school every day. This is not an open campus and students are not allowed to leave the grounds until the end of the day. *Failure to comply with this rule will result in suspension.* Student drivers must be registered with the Assistant Principal. Student drivers must park in the designated student parking area only. *Violation of General Conduct Rules, Classroom Conduct Rules, or irresponsible driving behavior may result in a suspension of driving privileges.*

### **PTF PARTICIPATION**

All parents are expected to participate in the school-parent group called the Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF). The PTF helps support the school in various ways to ensure the best possible education for the children. The PTF executes several fund-raisers throughout the school year to help defray school expenses. Parents will be notified of meeting dates annually.

### **Clubs And Organizations**

MZCA students may become involved in school sponsored clubs and organizations which may include Student Council, Society Of Excellence Honor Society, Yearbook, Dance Group, Cheerleading and Team Sports. Clubs may be added or deleted on the basis of student interest, availability of facilities, staff sponsors and equipment, at the discretion of the administration.

### **Exemption From Final Exams**

Students in grades 9-12 may be exempt from final exams during the fourth quarter only, at the teacher's discretion if they have a yearly classroom average of 93% or higher and have not been absent from class more than three (3) days.

### **Extra-Curricular Activity Policy**

Any student who exhibits behavior that is disruptive, rebellious, or inappropriate will be subject to probation from any extra-curricular activities at the discretion of the teacher(s), coaches, or the academy administration. Students who represent Mount Zion Christian Academy in extra-curricular activities should exemplify good Christian conduct, as they are examples to their peers, to other members of the community, and they represent the ministry of Jesus Christ.

### **Visitors**

Students are not allowed to bring visitors to school during the school day. This includes visitors from out-of-state, siblings not enrolled in the academy, and former academy students. Parents/Guardians who visit the school must check in at the security desk.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

Mount Zion Christian Academy (MZCA) will not dispense any medication (i.e., aspirin, Tylenol, Motrin, etc.). If a student needs to be administered medication during school hours, please notify the administration in writing. MZCA will have general first-aid supplies available for minor injuries.



**TELEPHONE USAGE**

Students are not allowed to use the telephone without prior permission from the administration. In the case of an emergency, students will be allowed to use the phone in the school office. Students, who are allowed to use the phones in the school offices for reasons other than an emergency, will be limited to three (3) minutes. The administrative staff will make calls for students who are ill.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

In the event of inclement weather that prohibits Mount Zion Christian Academy from having school, parents/guardians should refer to the news media listed below:

**WTVD-TV Channel 11 (Cable 6), Durham**

**WRAL-TV Channel 5 (Cable 3), Raleigh**

\*\*This handbook states the rules, regulations, expectations, policies, and procedures for Mount Zion Christian Academy as of the time it was written. The principal and others in authority over the academy reserve the right to edit existing rules or add additional rules as necessary to ensure a safe, productive educational environment.